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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MANAMA 000596

SIPDIS

EEB PASS TO USTR

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/08/2019
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [ELAB](#) [PHUM](#) [BA](#)
SUBJECT: A/USTR-LABOR VISIT TO BAHRAIN

Classified By: CDA Christopher Henzel for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

- 1.(C) Summary: Government officials said it will take a long time to end the sponsorship system for third-country labor, despite recent high-pr
- 2.(SBU) Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Labor Lewis Karesh and an inter-agency delegation discussed labor issues, particularly within t
4. The delegation met with the General Federation of Bahraini Trade Unions (GFBTU), Migrant Workers Protection Society (MWPS), and Bahrain Hun
- 3.(C) The Minister of Labor, Dr. Majeed Alawi, confirmed that Bahrain had enacted important regulatory changes that are aimed at giving third-c
- 4.(C) Alawi and Radhi both lamented that the business community has been the biggest obstacle to change. Alawi complained that Bahrain's reliar
- 5.(C) All interlocutors expressed their hope that the parliament would approve a new labor law to replace the existing one from 1976. (Note: Th
- 6.(SBU) GFBTU appeared satisfied with the current role of unions, but bemoaned the lack of government unions and strike limitations. Its repres
- 8.(SBU) The GFBTU and Labor Minister asked if the USG could help provide training to both companies and unions on how they should interact with
- 9.(U) The A/USTR-led delegation consisted of the following: USTR: Lewis Karesh, Assistant USTR for Labor Amy Karpel, Associate General Counsel